

La Vigna

VOLUME II, No.4

CHRISTMAS ISSUE

DECEMBER 1985



Philip Vincent Nazzaro helped us say "Merry Christmas!" on the front of this La Vigna, and is shown here with his parents Mary Lynn and Dan (Mary Lynn is the daughter of Pasquale and Jane Chianese). Philip helps his parents at Quakerbridge Office Supply and, since he arrived, just days before the La Vigna picnic this past summer, looks forward to meeting everyone at the next picnic.

FROM COAST TO COAST

Have any of you wondered lately how Ivan and Carey Bilancio are doing? The last time we heard about them in La Vigna, they had gotten married on the Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA. In August of this year they celebrated their 1st wedding anniversary. Congratulations You Two!

A few weeks ago, I called them to find out what was new in Los Angeles and had the pleasure of speaking with both Carey and Ivan. (By the way they are not easy to reach because of their busy work schedules.) Ivan recently became a member of Local 776 of the Film & Videotape Editors' Guild--both an honor and a major accomplishment. Hey, Boy! Now YOU ARE A UNION MAN! In addition, as an assistant sound editor at Marvel Animations and Productions, Ivan was able to contribute to the Emmy award winning children's T.V. show: Muppet Babies. ~~Hummmmmmm~~..... Perhaps it was a bit of Bilancio blood that helped bring in all those Hollywood honors!!!!!! (No. I am not biased.) Keep up the good work, cuz! Enough about you.....

Next Carey's bubbling warmth spilled out over the phone. She too is an assistant editor working for Film Impressions, a small L.A. trailer house. (Trailer houses are part of movie advertising within the film industry. Did you know that? I thought a trailer house was something you pulled behind your

Continued page 2

CASANDRINESE VISITS LAWRENCE

Some members of the Bilancio family had the pleasure this autumn of meeting Lucia Cimmino, 17 years old, who hails from Casandrino. This small town near Naples is the origin of the Bilancios and Chianeses, as well as other branches of our family.

Lucia, who recently returned to Casandrino, was in Lawrence visiting her father's Aunt Teresa and cousins Philip (Pat) and Josephine Petito. The Petitos used to live in the Burg and grew up with Rose, Lew and Jennie Bilancio. Lucia's paternal grandmother Lucia Montanino Cimmino was the sister to Pat's and Josephine's mother Teresa Montanino Petito. Lucia's mother's maiden name was Maria Bellardo. Do any of our Bellardos know of any relationship to Lucia? Lucia also informs us that there are many Chianeses in Casandrino today. Keeping track of the many vines in the family vineyard can be indeed complicated!

The Montague-Acquariva family clan wishes you all a merry and healthful Christmas and New Year.

CORINNE BILANCIO VISITS ATLANTA RELATIVES

--by C.B.

Corinne flew down to Atlanta over Veteran's Day weekend to visit Uncle Leo and Aunt Dorothy (Bilancio) and their daughter Jane and her husband David Darpinian. Jane and Dave have renovated the large garage next to Uncle Leo's house into their own beautiful and cozy apartment.

Corinne enjoyed the warm companionship of everyone and was especially glad to get acquainted with her new cousin-in-law Dave. Jane and Corinne reminisced about their childhood antics with Jane's brother Ivan when Corinne visited Atlanta in 1970, '71 and '72 (Ivan is now living in Los Angeles *). Some of their adventures will be recounted in a future issue of La Vigna.

* For news about Ivan see "From Coast to Coast", this page.

FROM COAST TO COAST

(Continued from Page 1)

car as you toured the country on vacation. You learn all kinds of interesting things when you live in California.) Carey also does free lance editing.

In addition, Carey was responsible for arranging Ivan's surprise visit to Atlanta over Thanksgiving. Well, the surprise was to be for Uncle Leo, but alas! Jane (Ivan's sister) spilled the beans ahead of time... Thanks, Jane! I'm glad it wasn't me.) Earlier this year Carey and Ivan were attending (in their spare time...) classes at UCLA. Carey was taking Italian. She is quite a linguist, I understand, with experience in Greek and Latin. Carey, how is the Italian class going? There are certainly a lot of people in our family who would be glad to help you practice.

One last thought... Carey is interested in some quick pasta recipes for those of us with hectic work schedules. Any ideas or suggestions out there? Please send them! Even short cuts to long recipes would be welcome.

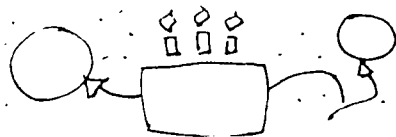
So, stay tuned for the next episode of "Coast to Coast" starring Carey and Ivan Bilancio.

-Roberta Immordino/Palo Alto, CA

Note: Quick pasta recipes can be sent to Carey at 20 Privateer, Apt. H, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292, or shared with La Vigna.



Christmas in the Louis and Rose Bilancio home in Lawrence, thirty years ago. Nicola Bilancio stands at right. Seated on the floor (from left to right) are his grandchildren Terry, Francis and Clothilda. Behind them are Louis and Nicola's daughters Rose and Lorraine. Standing are his daughter Sylvia (left) and granddaughter Beatrice.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

- Jan. 9 Phyllis Gervasio
23 Beatrice Johnson
24 Joseph Chianese
27 Ralph Gervasio
30 Debbie Armenti
31 Celeste Armenti
- Feb. 2 Steven Armenti
3 Frnk Garzio
7 Bob Chianese (Joe's Son)
12 Sandra Garzio
13 Marie Armenti
Angela Chianese Josephson
16 Lewis Bilancio
18 Vince Guerra
24 Dorothy Bilancio
- Mar. 6 Angela Gervasio
7 Loren Armenti
14 Leo Bilancio
24 Anthony Chianese
Louise Chianese
25 Ralph Gervasio
26 Carolyn (Immordino)
MacLeod
Richard Brett Cohen
28 Pam Chianese
29 Angelo Chianese

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

- Jan. 15 Jerry & Rita Chianese
- Mar. 8 Nick & Marie Armenti
10 Pat & Jane Chianese
16 Jennie & Bob Immordino
30 Carolyn & Jim MacLeod

A Child's Request

Carrie MacLeod, Carolyn's daughter, was given a beautiful toy house in honor of her 10th Birthday (Nov. 30th). Any reader of La Vigna who may have small furniture that they have no further use of might wish to consider donating it to Carrie. If so please contact her grandparents Bob and Jennie Immordino at 882-7138. Carrie lives with her parents and sister Jamie in Kent, Connecticut. Carrie's toy house was custom built to scale and greatly resembles the home they live in.

*A Merry Christmas
to Everyone.*

Jules Bellardo



Note on drawing: Zerbinetta and Harlequin are two characters from the Italian Folk-theater genre *la Commedia dell'arte*.

We of La Vigna, staff and readers alike, are fortunate in celebrating holidays throughout the year. We need not wait for Thanksgiving to be thankful for the fellowship of family and friends nor need we wait for Christmas to be giving of ourselves, for each time we share La Vigna it is a feast of togetherness.

On the occasion of this grandest of the year's holidays, I wish you peace, love and joy.

Corinne Bilancio

STAFF THIS ISSUE

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

La Vigna thanks the following for their donations:

Dorothy and Leo Bilancio
Lena and Fred Esposito
Terri and Ray Klepczynski
Pat Petito
Terry and Willie Bilancio
Anonymous

Corinne Bilancio
Lewis Bilancio
Fran Bilancio
Angelica Roberts
Angelo Chianese
Dean Acquaviva
Lucy Gervasio
Carolyn MacLeod
Lorraine Anthony
Antimo Bilancio
Lena Esposito
Terry Bilancio
Roberta Immordino
Mary Lynn and Dan Nazzaro

La Vigna Staff:

As we hear the beloved story
of the Christ Child once again,
And the choirs sing the angels' song
of "Peace, Good Will to Men,"
May God grant you His blessings
of Christmas joy and peace,
And through the year that lies ahead,
may all your joys increase.

With thanks for all you do for the "Family"
at this season and Always,

The Klepczynski Family

LETTER FROM MICHIGAN BILANCIOS

La Vigna readers may recall a letter we published last Christmas that Daniel Bilancio of Cassopolis, Michigan had written to Leo Bilancio in Atlanta. Daniel is the son of Arthur and Alice Bilancio. Their relationship to the New Jersey Bilancios has not yet been traced. Fran Bilancio and Angelica Roberts visited Dan and his family in Michigan last April. Here is a letter La Vigna recently received from Arthur Bilancio:

Dear Corinne,
Just thought I would drop a note and thank you for sending La Vigna.
We always had the idea we were the only Bilancios in the United States. Here in the South Bend, Elkhart area there are two Bilancio families, so it feels good to know there is a lot more of us.
If there is any way we can be of any assistance to you please feel free to ask.

Yours truly,
Arthur Bilancio

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS
FROM LEW BILANCIO

Dear Friend,

How fortunate to have this opportunity to send Christmas greetings to you by means of our own family newspaper!

The Bilancios from Glassboro, Lew, Corinne, and Bernice Smailer, send you greetings, an invitation to drop in if circumstances should so favor us as to bring you this way, and the assurance that we cherish happy memories of you.

This new year finds us all in good health, and with wounds healing, confidently staggering, walking, cruising, flying into the future!

Corinne, 25 years old, is editor of La Vigna. You hear from her regularly. We might add that she is happy at her job: secretary/administrative assistant to the head of the International Department at Central Penn National Bank in Philadelphia.

Lew and Bernice, having retired, have travelled, as might be expected. Margarita Island in the Caribbean, Florida, cruising the Dalmatian Islands, Sardinia, Tunisia, Italy.

Retired? Not quite. Bernice is a travel consultant for Jonathan's Travel in Turnersville, N.J. Lew is workshop-travel coordinator for the Adult Education Department at Glassboro State College. As always he dreams of organizing a happy group of friends to go on an ideal tour in an age where nobody will even be able to spell terrorists.

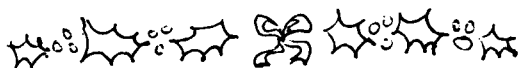
What a lovely time we had at Ship Bottom this summer. May we repeat it forever!

And here running around between our legs is the future: Lew's nephew Ira, Frannie's and Angelica's little son, who is beginning to face reality -- he no longer hides when he sees Lew.

And now there is this silver chariot, come so unexpectedly from the dark -- La Vigna -- to carry to you:

Warm personal greeting from us in Glassboro to family and old friends, and to extend a welcoming hand to the new friends and relatives in our wonderful La Vigna circle.

(Lew Bilancio is the son of Nicola Bilancio and Carolina Chianese Bilancio. His siblings are: Rose, Jennie, Sylvia, Leo and Lorraine.)



May the love,
joy and peace of
Christmas be with
you always.~

Lorraine, Jacalyn, John

MACY'S MAZE

AT CHRISTMAS I AM REMINDED OF THE YEAR THAT I WENT SHOPPING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE. A PAIR OF CRYSTAL SALT AND PEPPER SHAKERS WERE WHAT I SOUGHT. FOR HOURS I RODE THE ESCALATORS FROM FLOOR TO FLOOR, SEARCHING FOR THE PERFECT PAIR. WHERE WERE THESE ELUSIVE CRYSTAL PIECES? THROUGHOUT MACY'S MANY DEPARTMENTS, NOOKS, HIDDEN RECESSES AND BOLD DISPLAYS I WANDERED, AS THE CLOSING TIME RACED CLOSER AND CLOSER, NEARER AND NEARER TO THE MOMENT THAT WOULD DEMAND MY EXIT WITH EMPTY HANDS. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO THE COMPETITOR ACROSS THE STREET. THE SELECTION DID NOT APPEAR TO BE COMPREHENSIVE ENOUGH. WAS THIS REALLY THE WORLD'S LARGEST RETAIL STORE? WHY DIDN'T THEY HAVE MY CHOICE? SUDDENLY, ON THE DISPLAY COUNTER I HAD LOOKED AT MORE THAN TEN TIMES ALREADY, THERE WAS THE VERY SET I HAD IN MIND! SOMEONE MUST HAVE PUT IT OUT WHILE I WAS CHECKING THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTER! MANY TIMES SINCE I HAVE BEEN SHOPPING FOR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OR BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY PRESENTS, BUT NEVER HAVE I BEEN CONFRONTED WITH SUCH A WIDE SELECTION AT ONE TIME AND WITH SUCH TROUBLE IN FINDING THE CORRECT SELECTION.

Terry Bilancio

Merry Christmas!
Happy New Year!
The Johnson
family

FAMILY MAXIMS

(Proverbi Italiani)

"Ogni legnamme ai' 'o fumme suoi."

The other day I received some personal documents from my sister Clothilda in a used manila folder. On the folder was my father Louis's name with notes he evidently made for one of his many Italian community projects. On one corner was written

"OGNI LEGNAMME AI' 'O FUMME SUOI" I am advised that this is a "cleaner" form of the Neapolitan dialect. This proverb was heard "not often" at the Elmer Street home of Nicola and Carolina Bilancio.

Its translation is "EACH WOOD HAS ITS OWN SMOKE." This means that each person or family has its own character.

Fran Bilancio

Peace on Earth Good Will to Men.

Ira Giuseppe Roberts
Bilancio

NOTES FROM THE GARDEN At The Garden Gate

Fran Bilancio

What shall I tell you? About grandpop Giuseppe Bilancio (son of Luigi Bilancio--father of Luigi Bilancio) who cried? Or the same grandpop who laughed heartily and lent me hope with his enthusiasm for life and his gardening techniques which anticipated no end to tomorrows.

Shall I tell you about the pleasures of the garden and his company in the shade of the mulberry tree on timeless July afternoons? Or sitting on buckets in his shed, door open, watching a passing shower? Or about the pains of an underdressed rookie gardener caught in a cold front?

Shall I tell you about chopping wood under his direction or hauling 5 gal. buckets of dirt all day, two at a time, which made me feel strong and mature? Or about listening intently, like a small boy sitting by his grandpop's 95 year old side, to the history of the "old lots" owned by Antonio and Luigi Chianese and shared with the Bilancio brothers Nicola, Giuseppe and Petrucc' (also known as Uncle Charlie).

Do you want to hear one of the fire stories? About toasted bread and singed eye brows? About Joe Gervasio sitting with us for a visit? Or about the wet day Grandpop made Joe Bird and me build a bench against both our intentions?

Shall I tell you about the two persimmon trees and why one took 15 years to bear and the other did in eight?

What was the big "new" project proposed for the summer of '83 that made his eyes twinkle when he talked about it under the persimmon and why was it needed?

Where did he get that long black cashmere coat and why do I keep seeing the tiny red ember burning that hole in it?

What about the robin, feet straight up, we found one morning in the garden--dead center? What did we do with it? What did I learn from it?

Shall I tell you about the waxing gibbous moons rising mid-afternoon over the maples east of the garden?

Or the waning gibbous moons we would find in the morning lingering in the western sky before disappearing behind the neighboring warehouses?

Shall I tell you about the blackness of his soil, the abundance of earthworms and the day cousin Joe Armenti came by to gather some for a fishing expedition?

Shall I tell you about toads and rocks? Compost and cans? Water and well? Shovels and hoes? Bees and pears? Wasps and irises? May Caterpillars and rusty nails?

Or shall I tell you about picking icy persimmons and sucking their "honey" like Grandpop showed me? Or about harvesting frozen mustard greens days before Christmas?

Shall I tell you about the old man who sits in San Paolo's market on Hudson Street today--1985--who remembers my grandpop's father Luigi designing the Christmas creche for our family church in Casandrino, Italy?

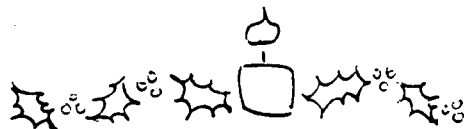
Shall I tell you about the annual narrowing space between earth and sky as we approached another winter solstice? About how the heavens moved as the old man locked the shed as he would each night and turned to me to say, "I'm-a ready. Letsa go"? About the indescribable change of light as the sun pushes against its southern most limits signalling a dimensional shift or warp?

We are still at the garden gate, my Grandpop and I, on our way home, when every year he would say, "I no bodder you-a no more. You do what-a you like," I then knew winter and Christmas were here.

He'd get in the car while I'd fish for my keys and take the last look of the year at the fence, at the vineyard, at the shed, at the paths, at the trees, at the spent tomato vines and corn stalks rustling in the December wind, at the smoky wisps from our doused fire, at the words and moments and memories of the year gone by.

Then I'd drive this frail Santa Claus of a Grandpop home to Bert Avenue where he would always wish me "Good-a luck!"

So I wish to you from the garden gate "Merry Christmas to all and to all 'Good-a luck!'"



Peace and Joy
to you all.
Love, Rose



MOM & POP CHIANESE

(Angelo & Assunta)

First I want to say that we were very sorry to miss our family picnic. My husband, Fred, was in the hospital that day, and I remember thinking about all the family together, even if it was a very rainy day. I missed seeing all my relatives together - all the people we are so close to.

My reason for writing this letter was to show this very special picture of my mom & pop which I've carried in my wallet for many years. Why this picture above all the others? It wasn't easy to have mom and pop pose for this picture. It was taken in a little photo booth in Wildwood. You all know how hard it was to get mom & pop to go to the shore, especially for a week!! Well, I managed to do it only twice in my lifetime. I'll never forget mom giggling when we took that picture! It's been a real treasure for me.

I also remember when we sat on the beach and pop looked around and said "Futta la fatiga," which means "The hell with work." By the way, the extent of mom & pop's bathing in the ocean was up to their knees. Can you picture mom holding her dress up and pop with his pants rolled up above his knees? I often think it's a shame they didn't do it more often in their younger days. They really enjoyed it.

By the way, get a load of mom's hat! I didn't think she'd wear it, but she did! I think this was truly one of their happiest times.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my sister & brothers for being what they are. There aren't many families these days that stick together. Every day we hear of people who don't see their brothers and sisters for years. It's unbelievable!

I would like to thank everyone involved with our paper for taking the time to put it together. I'm not a letter writer as many of you must know. I hate to write! But I had to share this one picture with everyone.

We're all getting up in years, and here's hoping we can share a few more years all together. We love you all.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Lena Esposito

WHAT COLOR IS THE INSIDE OF A WATER MOCCASIN'S MOUTH?

It was a beautiful summer day. My cousin Carmen was visiting for the weekend. Together we were going out to explore in the woods.

Behind the house ran a small brook. The waters came from a group of springs about a quarter mile from the house. Frogs and other animals lived along this stream. Carmen and I slowly walked upstream trying to find one of them.

Suddenly, there was a stirring in the flow.

"Carmen, look! A snake! Let's catch it!" "Yeah, let's take it home."

From reading Nabisco Shredded Wheat "Injun Unity" cards we knew that we had to hold the snake from behind its head. We took turns carrying the 36" reptile in our gloved hand (1 pair of gloves), as the dark snake opened and closed its mouth (white inside).

Proudly bearing our trophy-sized captive, we walked into the yard. As soon as he saw us, my uncle shouted, "Give me that snake!" With a quick flick of his wrist, he killed the snake and tossed it into the high woods. "That was a water mocassin! Where did you find it?"

My response was not at all voluntary, as my legs seemed to become water themselves.

It was a beautiful summer day. Cousin Carmen was visiting for the weekend.

Terry Bilancio

Holiday Greetings to family and friends.

Bob + Jennie Immordino

LA CUCINA

One of the popular culinary items at the recent Family Picnic was prepared by Carolyn Immordino MacLeod. At Angie's request Carolyn has submitted the Recipe used for the:

SPINACH-ARTICHOKE CASSEROLE

Serves 16

- 4(10ounce) packages frozen spinach, cooked and well drained
- 1 cup chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, melted
- 1 pint sour cream
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup, minus 3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
- 1 can artichoke hearts, cut into halves

Saute onion in butter. Add sour cream and cheese. Drain artichoke hearts. Mix spinach with sour cream and onion. Place in large shallow baking dish. Press (mix) artichoke hearts into mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Bon Appetit.

NOTE: You cooks probably caught our small mistake last issue. When Jennie Bilancio told us her recipe for chiffon cake, we should have written "Add cream of tartar to egg whites, then beat until very stiff."

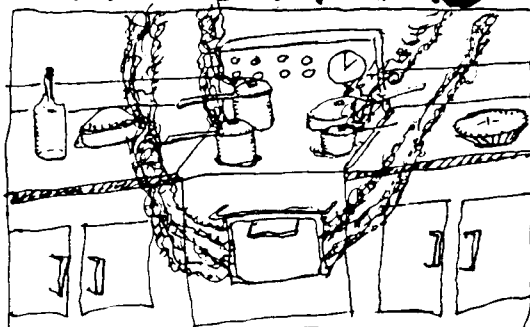
THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS



IS IT WRITING ALL THOSE REALLY CUTE CARDS?



IS IT BUYING ALL THOSE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS?



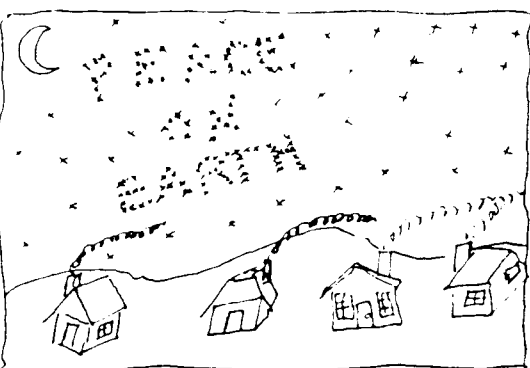
OR IS IT COOKING ALL THOSE SPECIAL HOLIDAY DISHES?



IS IT EATING ALL THAT WONDERFUL HOLIDAY COOKING?



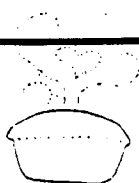
OR IS IT GOING TO ALL THOSE HOLIDAY PARTIES?



THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS IS WRITTEN IN THE STARS...

VIGNETTES

ILL. BY: DEAN ACQUAVA © 1985 DEANART
STORY BY: CORINNE BILANCIO



La Cucina



ANTIMO BILANCIO'S LASAGNA NO BEEF MEAT, NO TOMATOES

3 1/2 or 4 pounds tender chicken
2 tablespoons ground basil
2 tablespoons ground mint
1/2 ground lemon
1/2 cup ground peanut
3 sweet red or green ground pepper

Lasagna noodles
Ricotta cheese
Mozzarella cheese

MIX ALL THE GROUNDS

1/4 gallon of water

CUT CHICKEN IN PIECES

Put the grounds, water and chicken in a covered pan in the oven at 375 degrees. If liquid evaporates add more water when cooking. Cook it well. Remove from oven, remove all bones from meat, cut it in small pieces. Grind 2 bunches of broccoli. Put broccoli in a cooking pan, add 1 cup of water, all chicken gravy, 1/2 cup of chicken meat, boil for 9 or 10 minutes. Add 3 tablespoons of ground peanut, boil one minute, close heat, gravy finished.

Boil 1 1/2 or 2 pounds of lasagna.

In a large pan:

1 layer of lasagna
1 layer of chicken
1 layer of ricotta cheese
1 layer mozzarella cheese
1 layer of green or red (if red peppers used) gravy

Repeat another layer of each, top it with grated cheese, put it in the oven at 375 degrees for an hour or longer.

Next thing you do is eat it.

When, and if you try it, write few words in La Vigna and let me hear you.

In the next La Vigna I will continue Fort Monmouth army story of 18 months.

Dear readers, have a good Christmas and a happy New Year to all of you.

From ART

A general La Vigna meeting will be held Sunday, January 26, 1986, at 2:00 p.m. at 90 Eggerts Road, Lawrenceville. ALL ARE INVITED.

Deadline for the spring '86 issue of La Vigna is February 14, Valentine's Day.

Send your articles, photos, drawings, cartoon ideas, recipes and family maxims to:

LA VIGNA
90 EGGERTS ROAD
LAWRENCEVILLE NJ 08648

Send letters to the editor to:

CORINNE BILANCIO
324 N. DELSEA DRIVE
GLASSBORO NJ 08028

LA VIGNA
90 EGGERTS ROAD
LAWRENCEVILLE NJ 08648

Merry Christmas

